

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3400

ANSWERED ON:22.03.2017

Indecency in Reality Shows

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Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether indecency and slovenliness have been rising in the so-called reality shows being aired on various private channels in the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has received any complaints in this regard and if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) whether the Government has held anybody accountable in this regard and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) the measures taken to prevent misuse of the fundamental right of expression in the live debates on television; and
- (e) the provision for controlling the content of the reality shows which depict crimes?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING [COL RAJYAVARDHAN RATHORE (Retd.)]

(a) to (e): It is stated that as per existing regulatory framework, the telecast of content including reality shows on private satellite TV channels is regulated under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 (CTNA,1995) and Cable Television Network Rules, 1994 (CTNR,1994) framed thereunder. The Act does not provide for pre-censorship of content telecast on such TV channels. However, it prescribes that all programmes and advertisements telecast on such TV channels should be in conformity with the prescribed Programme Code and Advertising Code enshrined in the Act and the rules framed thereunder, which contain a whole range of parameters to regulate programmes and advertisements. An Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) has also been set up in the Ministry to look into the specific complaints or suo-motu take cognizance against the violation of Programme and Advertising Codes. Appropriate action is taken as per Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, if any violation of the said codes is established.

There have been instances of complaints pertaining to the reality shows and the details of action taken against the channels which were telecast on TV channels in violation of Programme and Advertising Codes since 2006 till date is enclosed at Annexure.

The Constitution through Article 19(2) allows State to impose reasonable restrictions on Freedom of Speech and Expression on grounds of sovereignty and integrity of India, security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States, public order, decency, or morality or in relation to contempt of Court, defamation or incitement to an offence through enactment of Law. This spirit of the Constitution is also reflected in the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, which while upholding the freedom of speech in electronic media imposes reasonable restrictions in public interest. Section 5 of the Act provides that "No person shall transmit or re-transmit through a cable service any programme unless such programme is in conformity with the prescribed programme code".
